FREIGHT NEWS

Freight Transportation Profile-District of Columbia Freight Analysis Framework

Understanding future freight activity is important for matching infrastructure supply to demand and for assessing potential investment and operational strategies. To help decisionmakers identify areas in need of capacity improvements, the U.S. Department of Transportation developed the Freight Analysis Framework (FAF), a comprehensive national data and analysis tool, including county-to-county freight flows for the truck, rail, water, and air modes. FAF also forecasts freight activity in 2010 and 2020 for each of these modes. Information about the methodology used in developing FAF is available on the Office of Freight Management and Operations' website www.ops.fhwa.dot.gov/freight.

The U.S. freight transportation network moves a staggering volume of goods each year. Over 15 billion tons of goods, worth over $9 trillion, were moved in 1998. The movement of bulk goods, such as grains, coal, and ores, still comprises a large share of the tonnage moved on the U.S. freight network. However, lighter and more valuable goods, such as computers and office equipment, now make up an increasing proportion of what is moved. FAF estimates that trucks carried about 71 percent of the total tonnage and 80 percent of the total value of U.S. shipments in 1998. By 2020, the U.S. transportation system is expected to handle about 23 billion tons of cargo valued at nearly $30 trillion.

District of Columbia

Table 1 presents information on freight shipments that have either an origin or a destination in the District of Columbia. As shown in the table, trucks moved a large percentage of the tonnage and value of shipments. Figures 1 and 2 show freight flows on the highway and rail modes.

Truck traffic is expected to grow throughout the District over the next 20 years (Figures 3 and 4). Truck traffic moving to and from the District of Columbia accounted for 1 percent of the average annual daily truck traffic (AADTT) on the FAF road network. Approximately 12 percent of the truck traffic involved trucks traveling through the District to other markets. About 87 percent of the AADTT were not identified with a route-specific origin or destination.

Table 2 shows the top five commodity groups shipped to, from, and within the District of Columbia by all modes. The top commodities by weight are secondary traffic and clay, concrete, glass or stone. By value, the top commodities are secondary traffic and food or kindred products. Secondary traffic is defined as freight flows to and from distribution centers or through intermodal facilities. No commodities are assigned to this intermediate step in the transportation process.

Table 1. Freight Shipments To, From, and Within the District of Columbia: 1998, 2010, and 2020

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA	Tons (millions)			Value (billions $)		
	1998	2010	2020	1998	2010	2020
State Total	7	11	14	7	13	22
By Mode						
Air	0	0	0	0	0	0
Highway	6	10	13	7	13	21
Other[a]	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1
Rail	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1
Water	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1
By Destination/Market						
Domestic	7	10	13	6	12	20
International	<1	<1	<1	<1	1	2

Note: Modal numbers may not add to totals due to rounding.

[a] The "Other" category includes international shipments that moved via pipeline or by an unspecified mode.

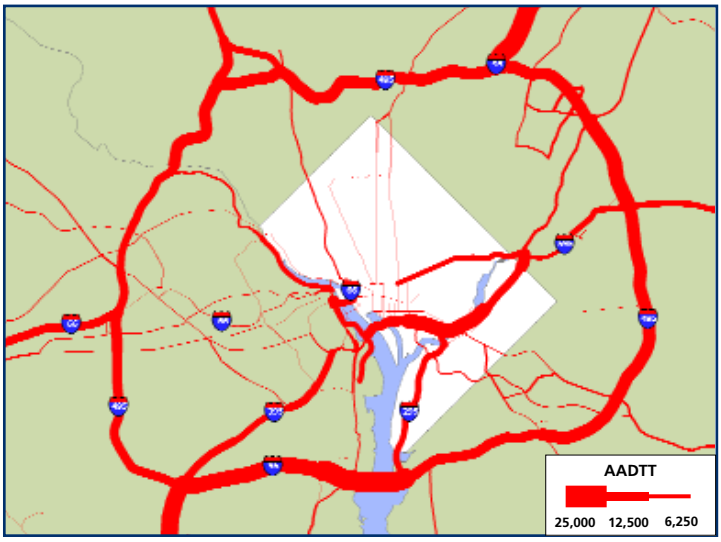
Figure 1. Freight Flows To, From, and Within the District of Columbia by Truck: 1998 (tons)

Federal Highway Administration

Figure 2. Freight Flows To, From, and Within the District of Columbia by Rail: 1998 (tons)

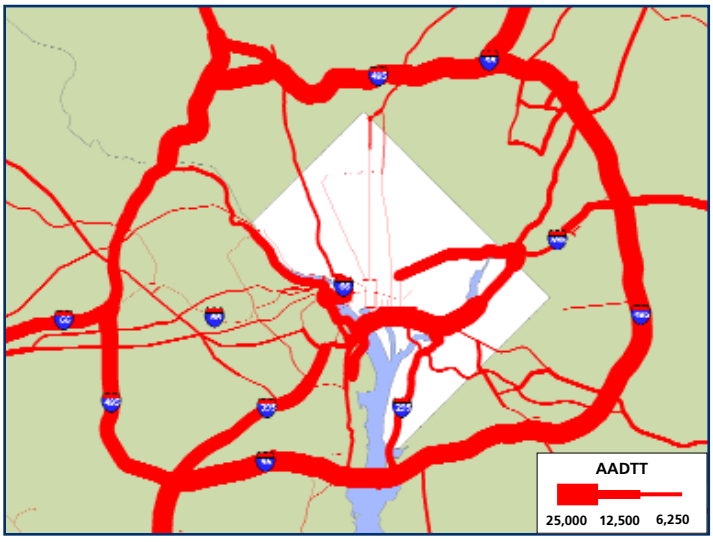
Federal Railroad Administration

Figure 3. Estimated Average Annual Daily Truck Traffic: 1998



Federal Highway Administration

Figure 4. Estimated Average Annual Daily Truck Traffic: 2020



Federal Highway Administration

Table 2. Top Five Commodities Shipped To, From, and Within the District of Columbia by All Modes: 1998 and 2020

Commodity	Tons (millions)		Commodity	Value (billions $)	
	1998	2020		1998	2020
Secondary Traffic	1.6	4.2	Secondary Traffic	1.7	6.5
Clay/Concrete/Glass/Stone	1.4	2.9	Food/Kindred Products	1.1	4.3
Food/Kindred Products	1.1	2.6	Transportation Equipment	0.9	2.5
Waste/Scrap Materials	0.7	0.7	Printed Matter	0.9	2.9
Primary Metal Products	0.6	0.5	Primary Metal Products	0.5	0.7

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A series of FAF products are available on the website noted below. FAF outputs include freight flow maps for states, modes, and gateways; detailed databases on traffic flows and commodity movements; information on the methodologies used to develop FAF; and forecast assumptions.

The U.S. Department of Transportation, Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS) is also developing a series of state transportation profiles. For more information and to obtain a copy of the BTS reports, please call 202-366-DATA.

U.S. Department of Transportation

Federal Highway Administration